

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 October 2016

by Jameson Bridgwater DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 24th November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/16/3156989
32 Colchester Drive, Pinner HA5 1DE

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Patricia Pearce against the decision of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/1460/16 was refused by notice dated 1 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Single Storey Front Extension; Single And Two Storey Side To Rear Extension With Gable End Roof; Single Storey Rear Extension; Side Dormer; Installation Of Roof lights To Front Rear And Both Side Roof slopes; External Alterations'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issues

2. The main issues in the appeal are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling with particular regard to the roof form; and
 - the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of Numbers 30 and 34 Colchester Drive (No's 30 and 34), with particular regard to privacy.

Reasons

3. Colchester Drive is a residential street which is suburban in character. The area as a whole is a high quality example of classic Metro-land architecture and urban design. The houses in the area are predominantly detached and two-storey with tiled roofs. The houses are constructed from a combination of brick and render, with many retaining their original timber fenestration. The majority of the properties have private off street parking and generous rear gardens. The space between the dwellings, materials and fenestration contribute to character and appearance of the area.
4. Number 32 is a two-storey detached property finished in brick and render with timber fenestration with gardens to the front and rear.

Character and appearance

5. I have carefully considered the appellant's representations in relation to the proposed gable roof form to the rear of the property. However, whilst I accept that gable roof features are prominent on the front (street facing) elevations of dwellings in the area; the rear elevations are predominantly hipped and this design feature contributes to the local distinctiveness of the area. Therefore
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the introduction of the substantial gable roof to the rear with its glazed fenestration would appear bulky and over dominant, when compared to the prevailing hipped roofs in the area. Consequently, the proposed development would appear incongruous and have an adverse impact on the suburban (Metro-land) character and appearance of the host dwelling and the immediate area.

6. The proposed development therefore conflicts with Policy DM1 of the Harrow Development Management Policies Local Plan; Policy CS1.B of the Harrow Core Strategy and Policies 7.4B and 7.6B of the London Plan. In reaching my conclusions I have also taken into account the Harrow Residential Design Guide SPD (2010) and permission Ref P/5791/15, which was granted on 15 February 2016.

Living conditions

7. It is clear from the submitted plans that the first floor master bedroom is not materially different to that of the approved scheme Ref P/5791/15. However, the introduction of the rear facing glazed gable feature in the roof space accommodation would materially increase the perception of overlooking. At such close proximity, this would result in unacceptable living conditions for the occupiers of No's 30 and 34 due to inadequate levels of privacy. I accept that fitting these windows with obscured glazing could prevent any direct overlooking. However, the presence of these windows, even if obscure glazed, would still result in the strong perception of being overlooked.
8. In reaching this conclusion I have considered the appellant's suggested amendments and conditions. However in this site specific circumstance I have determined the appeal on the basis of the plans submitted to the Council, mindful of the principles contained in the Wheatcroft decision. I consider that the suggested amendments are of a scale that the development is so changed that if I was minded to allow the appeal and grant planning permission it would deprive those who should have been consulted on the changed development of the opportunity of such consultation.
9. Having reached the conclusions above, the proposed development would result in material harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No's 30 and 34 by way of a loss of privacy and therefore conflict with Policy DM1 of the Harrow Development Management Policies Local Plan, Policy CS1.B of the Harrow Core Strategy and Policy 7.6B of the London Plan.

Other considerations

10. The appellant refers to a number of other schemes in the area with gabled roof designs and cites these as setting a precedent for this proposal. However, I have limited information about their histories, but inevitably their contexts would differ to that of the scheme before me, and so they do not lead me to a different view in this case.

Conclusion

11. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Jameson Bridgwater
INSPECTOR